

THE JOHN BELUSHI MEMORIAL POEM

hit a howard johnson's lounge
in utica, new york,
almost freaking out

on the insipid banality
of the ladies' night crowd,
an amalgam of absurd mediocrity

blaring speakers drowning out
quiet, social conversation,

the singer, bearded, paunchy,
off-key, sunglasses, low brim hat,
baggy designer jeans, john belushi
imitating kenny rogers imitating
leon redbone,

sharp faced 19-year-old virgins
and middle-aged gals wishing they were,
two in their 20s, matching eye shadow,
sweaters and stretch slacks strained
by potato sack thighs,

at the bar, sipping cheap scotch
and leering, 40ish dudes in wrinkled
leisure suits stolen from the
salvation army,

a kissy-faced couple and a gone
to fat ex-football player and his
peroxide blonde wife,

me, drinking jack daniels and
molson's ale, wondering if grendel
still listens at the meadhouse
door, j.b., loyal wife, sensing

my growing weirdness, drags
me back to our room and bed
and the reality of another
dull day, but the glint,
goddammit, still in my eyes.

HYPERTENSION

dad died at 47

grandfather at 53

morgan males traditionally
die before 60

except uncle bill, 71,
a balding hypochondriac

we somehow inherited hypertension
and faithfully pass it along
to each generation

i've got it

my son may get it

at 36, i've been taking pills
for years that make me pee
and sometimes inhibit hard-ons

i should lose weight and cut
more salt and booze from my diet

though I swim a mile with ease
can do 40 pushups and walk several
miles daily, weather permitting

i don't smoke or ingest caffeine
and rarely run around on my wife

i write poetry, smile at babies
and butterflies and haven't punched
a hole in a door in years

i may die young or may beat uncle
bill's longevity record, even my
hairdresser doesn't know for sure

so kindly indulge my periodic
outbursts of weirdness

it's what separates me
from those who talk to their shadows.

THE TIME I PAID FOR IT

oddly enough the affair
ended with us the best of friends

a flame still flickered
though i couldn't convince her
friends could be sometime lovers

once, on a whim, offered
\$20 and she quickly said yes,
we all have our fantasies,

she was perfumed and sexily
dressed when i arrived though
everything soon came off

even the black nylons

so i could feast
on her pert breasts
and bright red pubes

as i was leaving
she asked for her money
i grinned and said, "find it"